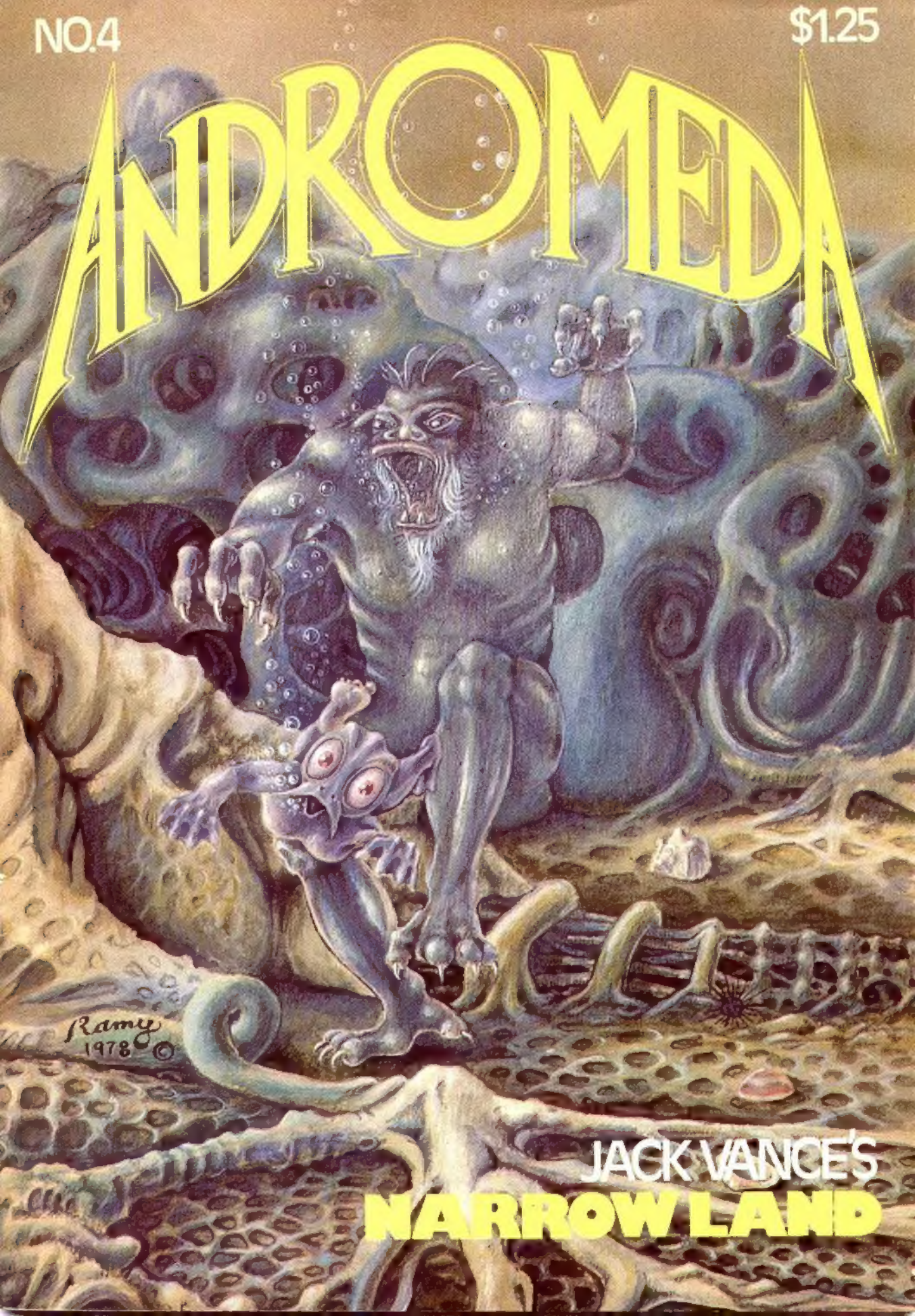
NO.4

$1.25

ANDROMEDA



JACK VANCE'S

NARROW LAND

The way I see it, there are three distinct types of gray matter at hand. The first, I think, is our old friend Mr. Brain. Granted, he doesn't get much use in this industry, but I'm sure he appreciates the concern we attempt to give him here at *Andromeda*. Actually, he is quite easy to operate. You can even do it while you're reading this magazine.

The second type of gray matter will probably stain your fingers if you flip through this issue too hastily. It's only printer's ink, though, and can be easily removed with a little soap and water. Our illustrators go to considerable lengths to achieve these tones: diluted ink and watercolour mixtures, pantone markers 400 through 447, letratone LT1 to LT204, etc. So don't smudge the pages—somebody else might want to buy this copy.

The third type of gray matter is a generic reference. It deals with the distinctions between "hard core" science fiction and comic book material, between morality and philosophy, between art and entertainment. It is not as accessible as the first type of gray matter, and not as tangible as the second. Appropriately, though, it is altogether the most difficult to make decisions on. We try to keep things correctly proportioned, however, and if your response is any indication, we're doing just fine.

NARROWLAND by Jack Vance, adapted by b. p. nichol, illustrated by Tom Nesbitt 2
Tom Nesbitt enjoys using the second type of gray matter almost to the extent that Mister Vance enjoys using the first. And, as this story is in a somewhat different vein for *Andromeda*, we are pleased to run it as the third.

FOR TOMORROW WE DIE, written and illustrated by Brian Lee & Marc Griffiths..... 34
Brian and Marc are yet two more students of Sheridan College's comic book production course. They present us with this archetypal tale of heroics, nobility and tragedy.

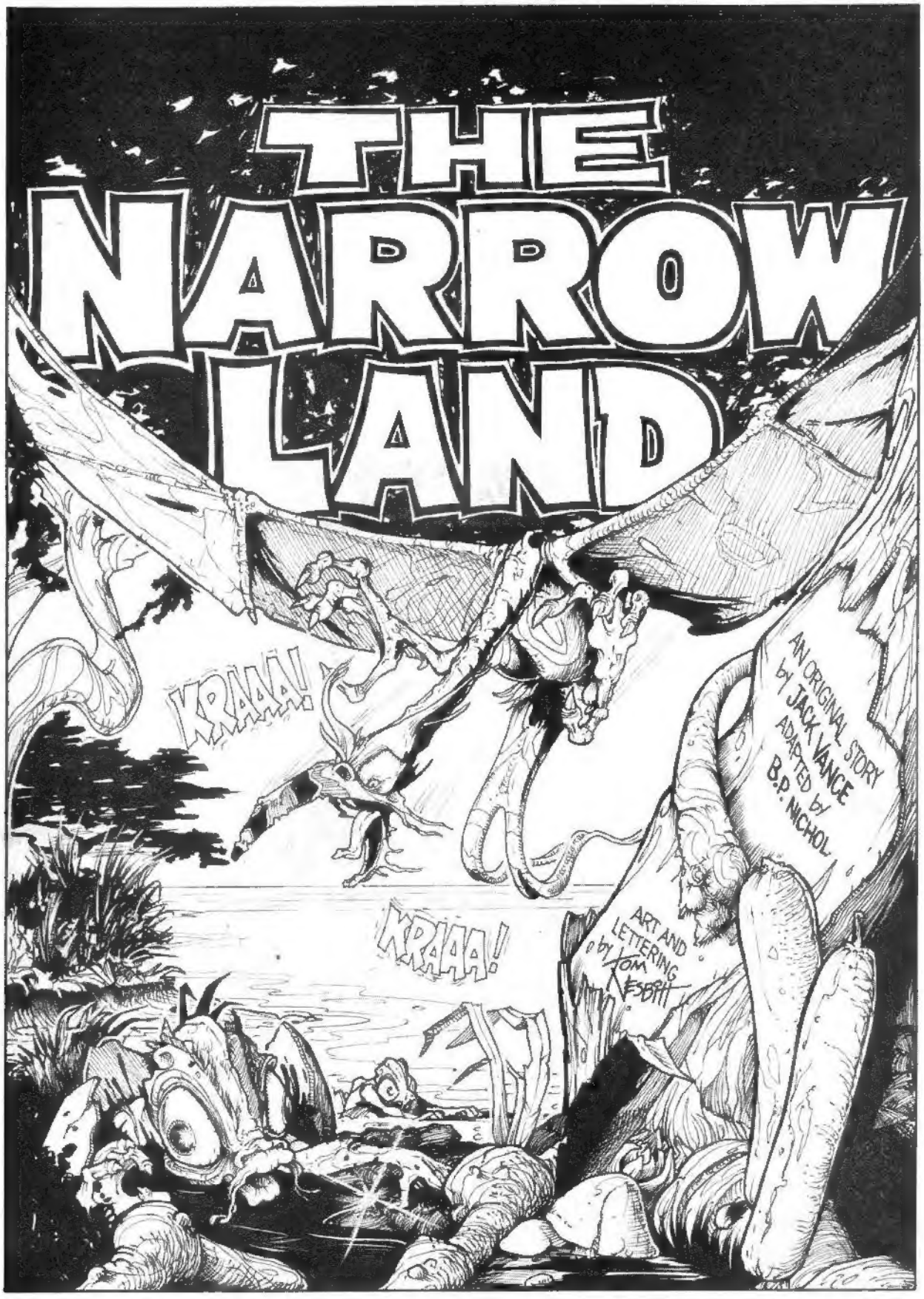
SPACE STUFF by Tom Nesbitt 43
Yeah, I know. Tom has been in this issue once already. Okay. But there's six pages of very enjoyable material here, and I think it's worth reading, you know? So does Tom.

Dean Motter

ANDROMEDA Vol. 2, No. 4 December 1978. Published by Andromeda Publications, owned and operated by Silver Snail Comics, Ltd., 321 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2A9. Dean Motter and Ron Van Leeuwen, associate editors. Cover © 1978 Ramy Bar-Elan. Frontispiece © 1978 Robert MacIntyre. Narrowland © 1978 Jack Vance, reprinted by permission of the author and the author's agents, Scott Meredith Literary Agency, Inc., 845 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022, illustration © 1978 Tom Nesbitt. For Tomorrow We Die © 1978 Brian Lee & Marc Griffiths. Space Stuff © 1978 Tom Nesbitt. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Founding publisher: Bill Paul. Distributed by Firefly Books, 2 Essex Avenue, Unit 5, Thornhill, Ontario, Canada. Printed in Canada.

Cover by Ramy Bar-Elan Frontispiece by Robert MacIntyre Contents Page by Paul Rivoche

A PAIR OF NERVES JOINED ACROSS THE TOP OF ERN'S BRAIN: HE BECAME CONSCIOUS, AWARE OF DARKNESS AND CONSTRICTION. THE SENSATION WAS UNCOMFORTABLE. HE TENSED HIS MEMBERS, THRUST AT THE SHELL, MEETING RESISTANCE IN ALL DIRECTIONS EXCEPT ONE. HE KICKED, BUTTED, CREATED A RUPTURE, CLAWED AT THE MEMBRANE, TORE IT BACK AND WAS MET BY A SUDDEN UNPLEASANT EXUDATION. THE JUICES OF A BEING NOT HIMSELF.
IT WRENCHED AROUND, REACHED FORTH. ERN RECOILED, STRUCK BACK THE PROBING MEMBERS, WHICH SEEMED OMINOUSLY STRONG AND MASSIVE. EACH FOUND THE OTHER HATEFUL: THEY WERE OF THE SAME SORT, YET DIFFERENT. THEY FOUGHT. ERN EVENTUALLY STRANGLED HIS OPPONENT, TRIED TO DETACH HIMSELF, FOUND THAT AN ADHESION HAD OCCURRED, THAT THE TWO WERE NOW ONE. ERN EXPANDED, SURROUNDED AND FUSED WITH THE DEFEATED INDIVIDUAL.
FOR A FURTHER PERIOD ERN RESTED EXPLORING HIS CONSCIOUSNESS. THE CONSTRICTION ONCE AGAIN BECAME OPPRESSIVE. ERN THRUST AND KICKED, CREATING A NEW RUPTURE, AND THE SHELL SPLIT WIDE.


THE NARROW LAND
AN ORIGINAL STORY BY JACK VANCE ADAPTED BY B.P. NICHOL
ART AND LETTERING BY TOM YESBITT
KRAAA!
KRAAA!

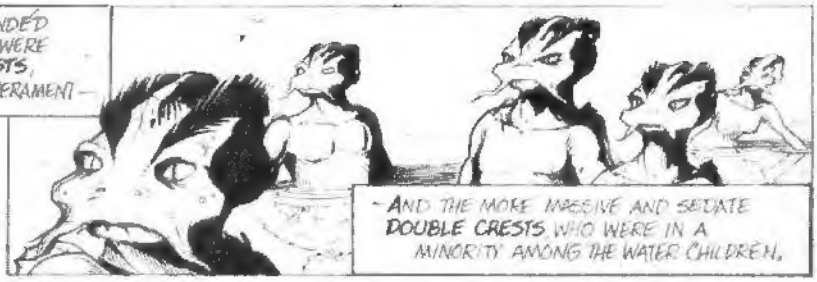
SO ERN ENTERED HIS CHILDHOOD, AND GRADUALLY BECAME WISE IN THE WAYS OF THE WATERWORLD.
MOST DREADFUL OF ALL WAS THE OGRE. ON ONE OCCAISION ERN NEARLY BECAME ONE OF ITS VICTIMS...

THE OGRE PURSUED MAKING IDIOTIC SOUNDS.
GNARF!
GNARF!
THEN, SEIZING ONE OF ERN'S PLAYFELLOWS...

...HE SETTLED TO THE BOTTOM TO MUNCH ON HIS CAPTIVE.
CRUNCH!

AFTER ERN GREW LARGE ENOUGH HE SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME ON THE SURFACE THOUGH HE UNDERSTOOD NOTHING OF WHAT HE SAW.
THE SKY A DULL GRAY FOG, SOMEWHAT BRIGHTER OUT OVER THE SEA, WAS CHANGELESS EXCEPT FOR AN OCCASIONAL WIND-WHIPPED CLOUD OR A TRAIL OF RAIN. CLOSE AT HAND WAS THE SWAMP, SLOUGHS, LOW-LYING ISLANDS OVERGROWN WITH PALID REEDS, COMPLICATED BLACK SHRUBS OF THE UTMOST FRAGILITY, AND A FEW SPINDLY PENDRONS. BEYOND HUNG A WALL OF BLACK MURK. ON THE SEAWARD SIDE THE HORIZON WAS OBSCURED BY A LIGHTNING SHATTERED WALL OF CLOUD AND RAIN. THE WALL OF MURK AND THE WALL OF STORM RAN PARALLEL, DELINEATING THE BORDERS OF THE REGION BETWEEN...

THE LARGER OF THE WATER CHILDREN TENDED TO CONGREGATE AT THE SURFACE. THERE WERE TWO SORTS: THE SLENDER **SINGLE CRESTS**, WHO WERE SOMEWHAT **MERCURIAL** IN TEMPERAMENT—



—AND THE MORE MASSIVE AND SEDATE **DOUBLE CRESTS**, WHO WERE IN A MINORITY AMONG THE WATER CHILDREN.

THOUGH HIS CREST DEVELOPMENT WAS NOT YET CERTAIN, **ERN** IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH THE LATTER GROUP.

IN DUE COURSE **ERN** LEARNED LANGUAGE, AND THEREAFTER, IDLED AWAY LONG PERIODS DISCUSSING THE EVENTS OF THE **SEA SHALLOWS**.

BY VIRTUE OF TRADITION TRANSMITTED ALONG WITH THE LANGUAGE, THEY KNEW THEIR DESTINY LAY AMONG THE **'MEN.**

AND THEN ONE DAY, ERN SAW MEN CLOSE AT HAND...
LOOK!
ERN WATCHED AS THE MEN CHASED THE HAPLESS WATER CHILD OUT TOWARDS THE WALL OF MURK.
WILD WITH FEAR, THE CREATURE SWAM FAR OFFSHORE, OUT OVER THE GULF, WHERE THE CURRENT TOOK HIM AND CARRIED HIM AWAY TOWARD THE STORM CURTAIN.
HOW COULD BEINGS SO MAGNIFICENT HOUND ONE OF US TO HIS DOOM?

ERN WATCHED INTENTLY AS THE MEN WALKED ASHORE...
'... AND UPON ATTEMPTING HIS FIRST CLUMSY STEPS ON DRY LAND --
HEY!
ERN'S LEGS CARRIED HIM IN WOBBLING LEAPS...
I AM NOT A MAN! THEY ARE NOT MY SORT!
... TO THE SAFETY OF THE WATER.
PERPLEXED, ERN RETURNED TO THE SHALLOWS. BUT NOTHING WAS AS BEFORE...
...THE INNOCENCE OF THE EASY OLD LIFE HAD DEPARTED. SINGLE AND DOUBLE CRESTED WATER CHILDREN NO LONGER ASSOCIATED WITH ONE ANOTHER.
THE SHORELINE BECAME A PREOCCUPATION. IT WAS NOW CLEAR TO ERN IF HE EVER WISHED TO GO ASHORE HE MUST LEARN TO WALK.

ONE DAY HE SWAM ALONG THE COAST FARTHER THAN HE HAD EVER VENTURED BEFORE...
THE STORM WALL WAS CHANGELESS, AND THE WALL OF MIST WAS THE SAME THE NARROW LAND EXTENDED ENDLESSLY ONWARD...
ERN DECIDED TO GO FARTHER AND RETRACE THE WAY HE HAD CAME.
ONE DAY DURING ONE OF HIS VISITS ASHORE HE CAME UPON A MOST UNUSUAL SIGHT...

WHEN THE WOMAN DEPARTED, ERN WENT TO EXAMINE THE EGG.
"THIS IS OUR ORIGIN! I EMERGED FROM JUST SUCH AN EGG!
TIME PASSED. ERN BECAME TRULY IN TOUCH WITH HIS ENVIRONMENT ONCE MORE.
THERE WAS NO APPARENT TERMINATION TO THE NARROW LAND;
IT APPEARED TO REACH FOREVER BETWEEN THE WALLS OF STORM AND GLOOM.

ERN RETURNED TO THE [illegible]
NOT WHOLLY [illegible] CHANGES
WERE [illegible] PLACE; THEY COULD
NOT BE IGNORED...
BUT [illegible] OF A GENERA. [illegible]
[illegible] COMING OF THE
MEN TOOK THE CHILDREN
[illegible]
IN THE NUMBER OF
TWO HUNDRED
[illegible]
...AND [illegible]
[illegible] THE [illegible]
[illegible] WATER [illegible]
THEY MILLED AND
SWAM IN EXCITED [illegible]...
WHILE ERN AND A FEW [illegible]
[illegible] AMONG THE REEDS
OF THE ISLAND AND CONCEALED
THEMSELVES.

MEN
FINGERLINGS
SPRATS
ERN
MIN
ERN
VILLAGE OF THE MEN..

ON A PLATFORM IN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE
STOOD FOUR MEN AND FOUR WOMEN.
GIRLS
PAINT

HIS POSITION REVEALED TO THE MEN BY THE SCREECHING BIRD ERN BEGAN TO RUN...
BUT TO NO AVAIL.
THE FOUR MEN SURROUNDED ERN TO MAKE THEIR EXAMINATION. AFTER A MUMBLE OF DISCUSSION THE MALLET WAS BROUGHT FORWARD AND...
WAIT!

ERN WAS THOROUGHLY CONFUSED. WHY HE WONDERED HAD HE FIRST BEEN THREATENED WITH A MALLET THEN WOUNDED WITH A KNIFE? THE SITUATION WAS INCOMPREHENSIBLE.
TIME PASSED. THE MALE AND FEMALE CHILDREN BECAME MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND UNDERWENT INSTRUCTION. ERN WHO WAS IMPRISONED IN A SMALL BOOTH, MANAGED TO ESCAPE APATHY ONLY BY ATTENDING THE INSTRUCTION BEING CONDUCTED IN ADJOINING BOOTHS. HE WAS FED IRREGULARLY, AS OCCASION SEEMED TO WARRANT AND RECIEVED MINIMAL ATTENTION...
UNTIL ONE DAY...
JOGGING ALONG AT HALF TROT THEY TOOK ERN THROUGH PLACES PROBABLY KNOWN AS 'SEA LEFT'; WHICH WAS TO SAY, WITH THE SEA ON THE LEFT HAND; THEN, VEERED INLAND, RISING OVER BARE HUMMOCKS DROPPING INTO DANK SWALES.
THE MEN OFFERED NO HINT OF THEIR INTENTION...

AT THE EDGE OF A MEADOW STOOD A ROW OF SIX STAKES. AAT TO THE LEFT OF THESE THE MEN MET ERN...
THIS IS THE VILLAGE OF THE TWOS. FOLKS SUCH AS YOURSELF...
DO NOT MENTION THAT WE CUT YOUR SCALP, OR AFFAIRS WILL GO BADLY.
TEN PERSONS SET FORTH FROM THE CITY. IN FRONT CAME FOUR SPLENDID TWOS, STEPPING CAREFULLY WITH AN EXAGGERATED STRUTTING GAIT, FOLLOWED BY SIX ONE GIRLS. ERN STARED IN FASCINATION. THE TWOS APPEARED TO BE OF HIS OWN SORT, STURDIER AND HEAVIER THAN THE CLEAVER HEADED ONES.

DO YOU SPEAK?
YES.
YOU MUST SAY "YES PRECEPTOR OF THE STORM DAZZLE", SUCH S THE FORM.
YES PRECEPTOR OF THE STORM DAZZLE.
COME THEN! WALK CORRECTLY! YOU ARE A TWO, AN IMPORTANT INDIVIDUAL!
YOU MUST ACT APPROPRIATELY ACCORDING TO THE 'WAY'.
YES PRECEPTOR OF THE STORM DAZZLE.
'PRECEPTOR OF THE DARK CHILL.'

ONCE IN THE CITY, ERN WAS INTRODUCED TO ANOTHER PAIR OF ELEGANTLY GARBED TWOS' KNOWN AS 'THE PEDAGOGUE OF THE STORM DAZZLE' AND 'THE PEDAGOGUE OF THE DARK CHILL'...
AGAIN THE BUMPS AND HUMMOCKS ON HIS HEAD WERE EXAMINED. ERN SUSPECTED THAT THE ONES USED DUPLICITY IN ORDER TO SELL HIM TO THE TWOS...
THEY HAD SIMULATED DOUBLE RIDGES ACROSS HIS SCALP AND HE BEGAN TO BELIEVE HE WAS MERELY A PECULIAR VARIETY OF ONE...
THE SUSPICION MADE HIM MORE UNEASY THAN EVER AND HE WAS RELIEVED WHEN THE PEDAGOGUES BROUGHT HIM A CAP TO COVER HIS SCALP, ALONG WITH OTHER STRANGE APPAREL.
THE WAY REQUIRES THAT YOU STAND WITH BLACK TOWARD NIGHT AND SILVER TOWARD CHAOS IN LOW CEREMONIAL ACTIVITY...
IF A RITUAL OR OTHER URGENCY IMPEDES, REVERSE YOUR CAP.
YOU ARE SOMEWHAT MORE CRUDE AND GROSS THAN THE USUAL CADET. THE INJURY TO YOUR HEAD HAS AFFECTED YOUR CONDITION.
YOU WILL BE CAREFULLY SCHOOLED. AS OF THIS MOMENT CONSIDER YOURSELF A MENTAL VOID.
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED ERN STUDIED DILIGENTLY AND ASSIMILATED KNOWLEDGE WITH A FACILITY WHICH WON HIM GRUDGING COMPLIMENTS.
HHHH
WE INHABIT THE NARROW LAND...
WHEN HE SEEMED PROFICIENT IN PRIMARY METHODS, HE WAS INTRODUCED TO COSMOLOGY AND RELIGION.

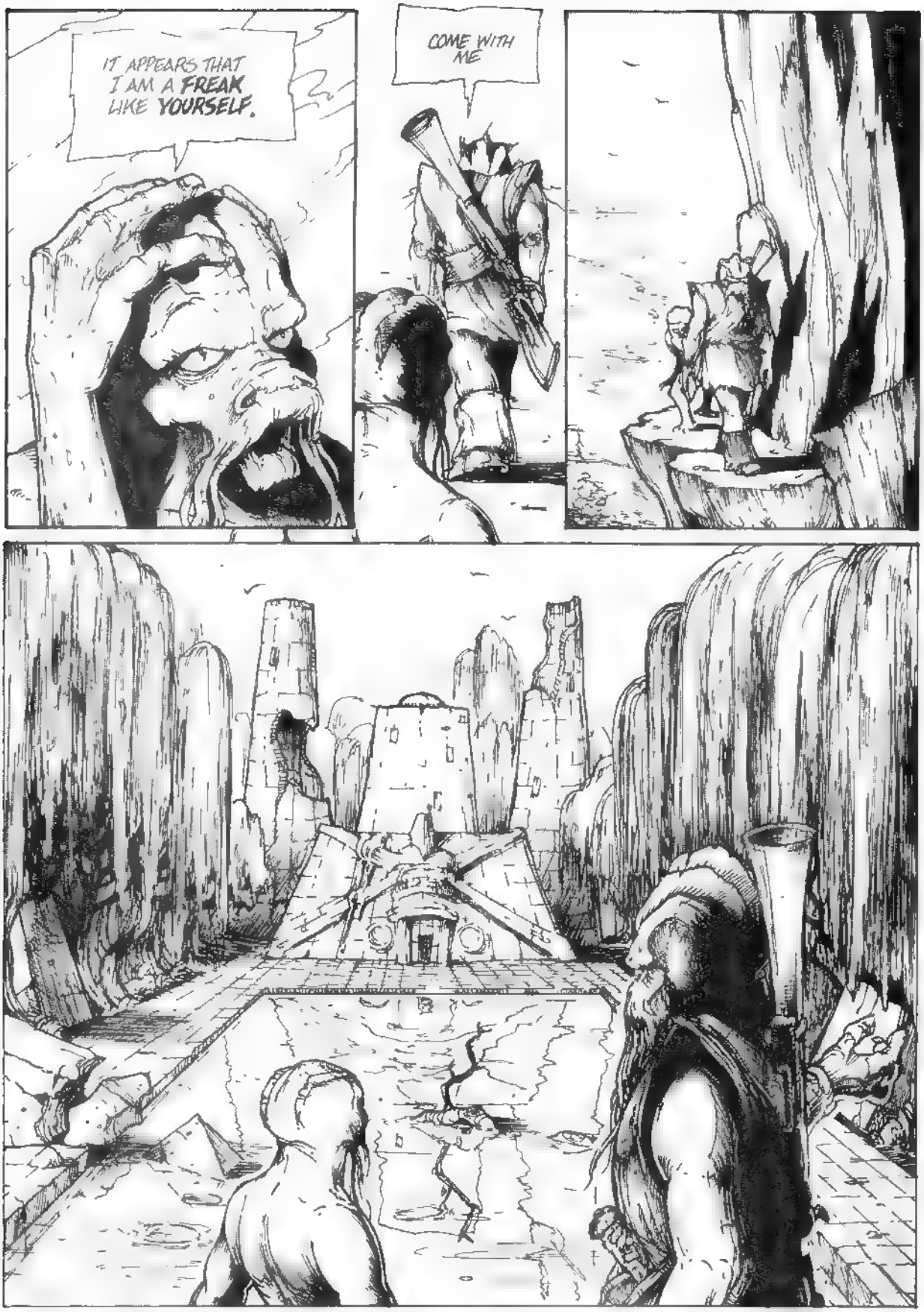
IF EXISTENCE FOREVER, HOW CAN WE ASSESS THE WORTH WITH WHICH THAT EXISTENCE? BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT THE OTHER WE TRINITIES OF STORM WE DARK CHILL BE WE DIVINE, ARE WE INFINITE. THEREFORE THE NARROW AND THE RESTRICTIVE NATURE OF EXISTENCE AS WE KNOW IT
ERN?
WHAT EXISTS BEHIND THE WALL OF STORM?
THERE IS NO 'BEHIND'! STORM CHAOS IS AND DAZZLES THE DARK IS WITH HIS LIGHTNING. THAT IS THE MASCULINE IT IS! DARK CHILL THE FEMALE IS NOT DIE, IS. SHE SOOTHES OF RAGE AND FEAR AND QUELLS.!!
THERE ARE NEITHER TWO MEN NOR TWO WOMEN, WE ARE BROUGHT INTO BEING BY DUAL-DIVINE INTERVENTION, WHEN A PAIR OF EGGS FROM A ONE WOMAN'S CLUTCH ARE PUT DOWN IN JUXTAPOSITION!
WE TWOS PARTAKE OF EACH OTHER AT EQUILIBRIUM EXCELLENT.
HE AN MAN'S PART PROVIDE EGGS.
IT WAS EVIDENT TO ERN THAT QUESTIONING DISTURBED THE PEDAGOGUE, SO HE DESISTED.
YES, PEDAGOGUE OF THE STORM DAZZLE.
BUT EVEN THEN ERN, A YOUNG ONE ATROPHIED ORGANS OF THE TWO HIS SEXUAL KIND HAD DEVELOPED NOTICEABLY.
THROUGH ALTERNATION, THESE ARE ALWAYS MALE AND FEMALE AND SO YIELD A DOUBLE INDIVIDUAL, NEUTRAL AND DISPASSIONATE, SYMBOLIZED BY THE PAIRED CRANIAL RIDGES. ONE MEN AND ONE WOMEN ARE INCOMPLETE, FOREVER DRIVEN BY THE URGE TO COUPLE; ONLY FUSION YIELDS THE TRUE TWO!
AND OTHER MATTERS TROUBLED ERN...
IT IS FORTUNATE I WEAR THIS SHAWL. THE PEDAGOGUES WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND

AND STILL OTHER MATTERS
PEDAGOGUES OF STORM DAZZLE AND DARK CHILL, HOW IS IT THAT WE HAVE DEVELOPED SKILLS?
THE MATTER IS IRRELEVANT! WHAT IS, IS, AND BY THIS TOKEN IS OPTIMUM!!
THE VERY FACT THAT YOU HAVE FORMED THIS INQUIRY BETRAYS A DISORGANIZED MIND, MORE TYPICAL OF A 'FREAK' THAN A TWO!
WHAT IS A 'FREAK'?
ONCE AGAIN YOUR MENTALITY TENDS TO RANDOM ASSOCIATION AND DISCONTENT WITH AUTHORITY!
RESPECTFULLY, PEDAGOGUE OF DARK CHILL, I WISH ONLY TO LEARN THE NATURE OF WRONG, SO I MAY DISTINGUISH IT FROM RIGHT!
IT SUFFICES THAT YOU IMBUE YOURSELF WITH RIGHT, WITH NO REFERENCE WHATEVER TO WRONG!!
SURPRISING PERVERSITY!!
YES, BUT FOR THE EVIDENCE OF THE CRANIAL RIDGES--

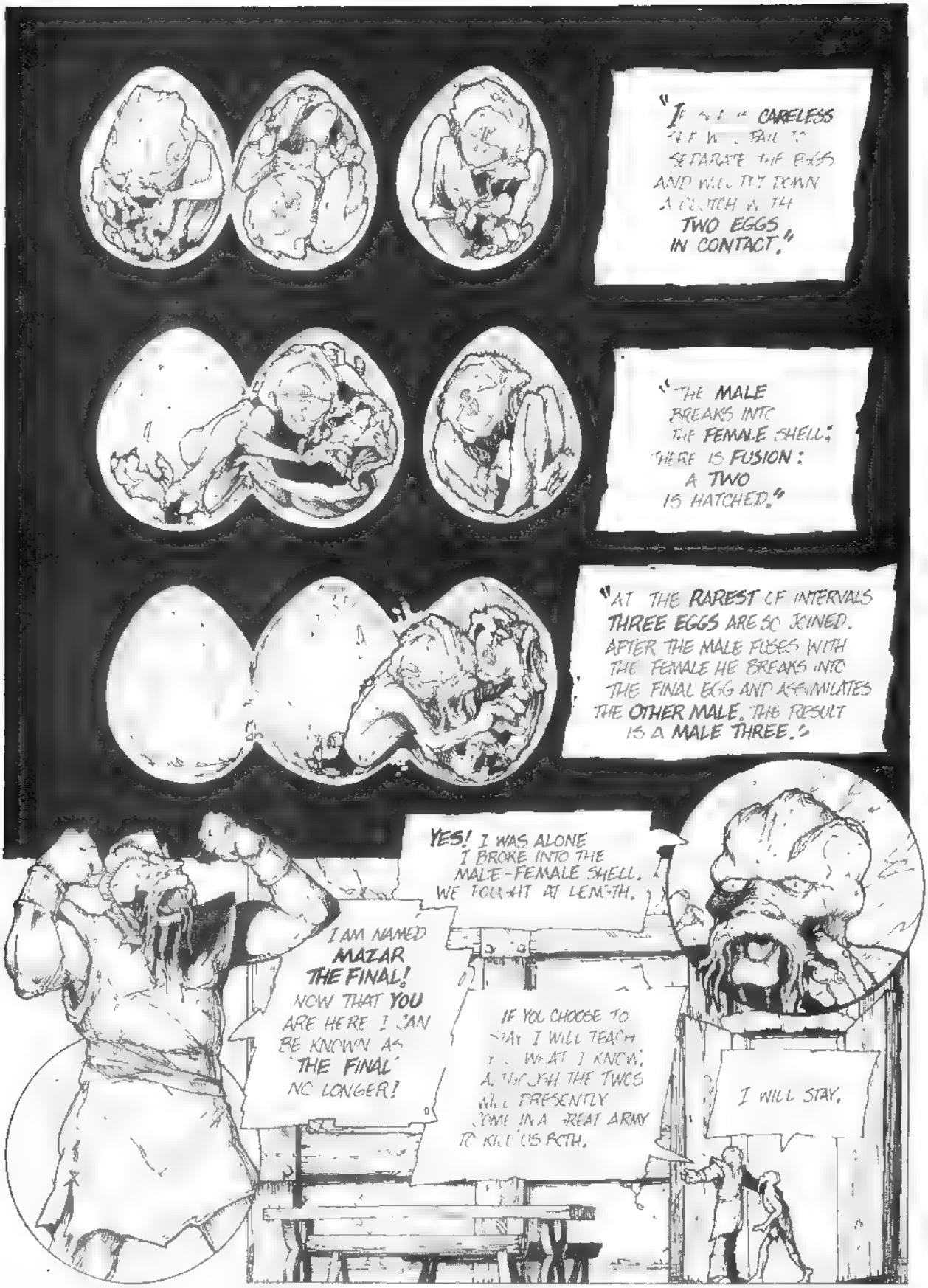
THOUGHTFULLY, ERN RETURNED TO HIS CUBICLE.
COULD A 'FREAK' POSSIBLY BE A MASCULINE TWO? IF SO THIS WOULD DEFINITELY EXPLAIN MY INTEREST IN THE ONE GIRLS.
IN DUE COURSE, A ONE GIRL HAPPENED BY, SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY, HE SUMMONED HER INTO HIS CUBICLE AND MADE HIS WISHES KNOWN.
BUT, YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE NEUTRAL WHAT WILL EVERYONE THINK?!
NOTHING WHATEVER, IF THEY ARE UNAWARE OF THE SITUATION.
TRUE. BUT IS THE MATTER FEASIBLE? I AM A ONE AND YOU ARE A TWO--
THE MATTER MAY OR MAY NOT BE FEASIBLE; HOW WILL THE TRUTH BE KNOWN UNLESS IT IS ATTEMPTED, ORTHODOXY NOTWITHSTANDING."
WELL, THEN, AS YOU WILL...
MOMENTS LATER AS A 'MONITOR' INSPECTS THE CUBICLES--
WHAT-- WHAT GOES ON HERE?!
IT'S A-A FREAK! A FREAK! A FREAK! HERE AMONG US! A FREAK! TO ARMS! KILL THE FREAK!
FREAK! FREAK! FR-OOORF!
SWAP!
ONCE OUTSIDE THE BARRACKS BUILDING...
MINGLE WITH THE OTHERS, DENY EVERYTHING! I NOW FEEL THAT I MUST LEAVE!

THE HALBERDIERS OF THE CITY, INFORMED OF THE EMERGENCY WERE ARRAYING THEMSELVES IN FORMALLY APPROPRIATE GEAR, ERN TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE DELAY AND RAN TO THE NEARBY WOODS...
"FREAK!! FREAK!! FREAK!!
AWWK! AWWK!
SUDDENLY, A MASSIVE STONE WALL, OVERGROWN WITH BLACK AND BROWN LICHEN, LOOMED BEFORE HIM.
ERN RAN STAGGERING AND WOBBLING ALONG THE WALL WITH THE HALBERDIERS CLOSE UPON HIM. HE COULD SEE NO WAY OF ESCAPE...
FREAK! FREAK!
KILL THE FREAK!
...UNTIL--
ERN WAITED DESPONDENTLY FOR DISCOVERY AND DEATH AS ONE OF THE HALBERDIERS VENTURED THROUGH THE WALL...
...ONLY TO GIVE A STARTLED GRUNT AND JUMP BACK.

WHY DO THEY HUNT YOU?
THEY CALLED ME FREAK AND DROVE ME FORTH.
FREAK!? YOU ARE A TWO!
THE ONES CUT MY HEAD TO MAKE SCARS. THEN THEY SOLD ME TO THE TWOS.


IT APPEARS THAT I AM A FREAK LIKE YOURSELF.
COME WITH ME

SIT!
YOU ARE HUNGRY?
NO.
HOW WAS YOUR IMPOSTURE DISCOVERED?
ERN RELATED THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO HIS EXPOSURE.
I HAD LONG SUSPECTED I WAS SOMETHING OTHER THAN A TWO.
YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY A THREE UNLIKE THE NEUTER TWOS THREES ARE NOTABLY MASCULINE, WHICH EXPLAINS YOUR INCLINATION FOR THE ONE WOMAN.
UNLUCKILY THERE ARE NO THREE FEMALES.
THEY DID NOT TELL YOU HOW YOU WERE BORN?
I AM THE PRODUCTION OF ONE EGG.
TRUE. THE ONE WOMAN LAYS EGGS OF ALTERNATE SEX IN CLUTCHES OF THREE. THE PATTERN IS MALE-FEMALE MALE; SUCH IS THE NATURE OF HER ORGANISM.


"IF [illegible] CARELESS [illegible] FAIL TO SEPARATE THE EGGS AND WILL PUT DOWN A CLUTCH WITH TWO EGGS IN CONTACT."
"THE MALE BREAKS INTO THE FEMALE SHELL: THERE IS FUSION: A TWO IS HATCHED."
"AT THE RAREST OF INTERVALS THREE EGGS ARE SO JOINED. AFTER THE MALE FUSES WITH THE FEMALE HE BREAKS INTO THE FINAL EGG AND ASSIMILATES THE OTHER MALE. THE RESULT IS A MALE THREE."
YES! I WAS ALONE I BROKE INTO THE MALE-FEMALE SHELL. WE FOUGHT AT LENGTH.
I AM NAMED MAZAR THE FINAL! NOW THAT YOU ARE HERE I CAN BE KNOWN AS 'THE FINAL' NO LONGER!
IF YOU CHOOSE TO STAY I WILL TEACH [illegible] WHAT I KNOW, ALTHOUGH THE TWOS WHO PRESENTLY COME IN A GREAT ARMY TO KILL US BOTH.
I WILL STAY.

THE TWOS HAVE KILLED ALL — ALL BUT MAZAR THE FINAL.
AND ERN!
AND NOW ERN.
BUT, WHAT OF BEYOND THE RIVERS ALONG OTHER SHORES. ARE THERE NO MORE MEN?
WHO KNOWS?
THE WALL OF STORM CONFRONTS THE WALL OF DARK; THE NARROW LAND EXTENDS - HOW FAR? IF TO INFITY THEN ALL POSSIBILITIES MUST BE REALIZED..
IF THE NARROW LAND TERMINATES AT CHAOS, THEN WE MAY BE ALONE.
I HAVE TRAVELLED BOTH WAYS UNTIL WIDE RIVERS STOPPED.
I BELIEVE THAT IT MUST EXTEND TO INFINITY.

WHO USED THESE MARVELOUS OBJECTS. WERE THERE MANY THREES?
AT ONE TIME THERE WERE MANY. I AM THE LAST.
WHY WERE THERE SO MANY THEN AND SO FEW NOW.
IT IS A MELANCHOLY TALE.
A ONE TRIBE LIVED ALONG THE SHORE, WITH CUSTOMS DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES OF THE SWAMP. THEY WERE A GENTLE PEOPLE RULED BY MENA THE ORIGIN, A THREE WHO HAD BEEN BORN BY ACCIDENT.
HE CAUSED THE WOMEN TO PRODUCE CLUTCHES WITH EGGS PURPOSELY JOINED, SO THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF THREES CAME INTO BEING.
IT WAS A GREAT ERA. WE CREATED A NEW EXISTENCE. WE BUILT THIS HALL AND MANY MORE.

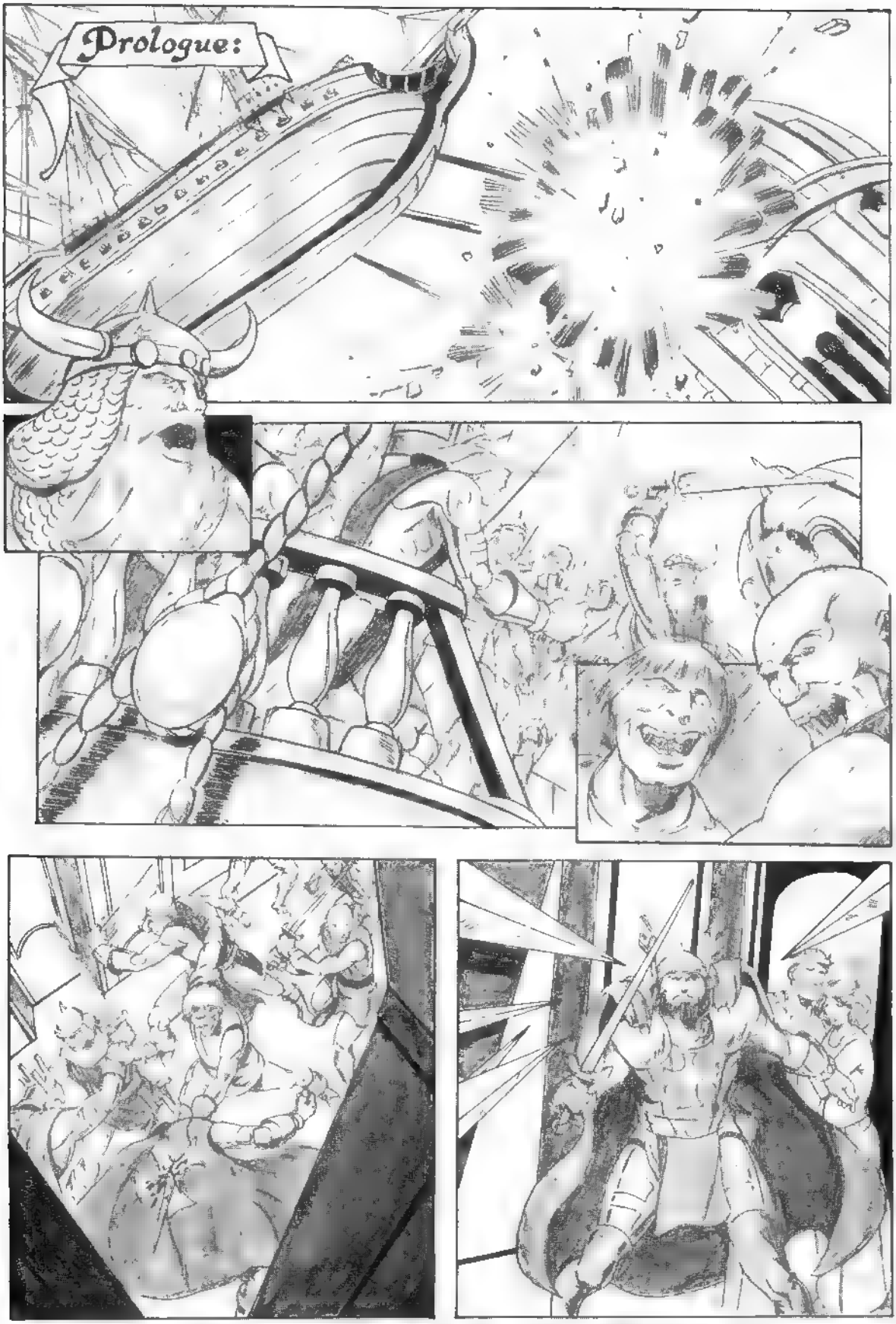
THE ONES AND TWOS BOTH LEARNED FROM US AND PROFITED.
WHY DID THEY WAR UPON YOU?
BY OUR FREEDOM WE INCURRED THEIR FEAR. WE SET OUT TO EXPLORE THE NARROW LAND. AN EXPEDITION PENETRATED THE DARK CHILL TO A WILDERNESS OF ICE, SO DARK THAT THE EXPLORERS WALKED WITH TORCHES.
WE BUILT A RAFT AND SET IT TO DRIFT UNDER THE WALL OF STORM. THERE WERE THREE ONES ABOARD.
THE RAFT WAS TETHERED WITH A LONG CABLE. WHEN WE PULLED IT BACK THE ONES HAD BEEN RIVEN BY TWOS AND WERE DEAD.
BY THESE ACTS WE INFURIATED THE TWO PRECEPTORS. THEY DECLARED US IMPIOUS AND MARSHALLED THE ONES OF THE SWAMP.
THEY MASSACRED THE ONES OF THE SHORE.
THEN THEY MADE WAR ON THE THREES. AMBUSH, POISON, PITFALL: THEY SHOWED NO MERCY. WE KILLED TWOS; THERE WERE ALWAYS MORE TWOS, BUT NEVER MORE THREES.
I COULD TELL LONG TALES OF THE WAR, BUT ENOUGH FOR NOW. GO WHERE YOU WILL EXCEPT BEYOND THE WALL, WHERE THE TWOS ARE DANGEROUS.

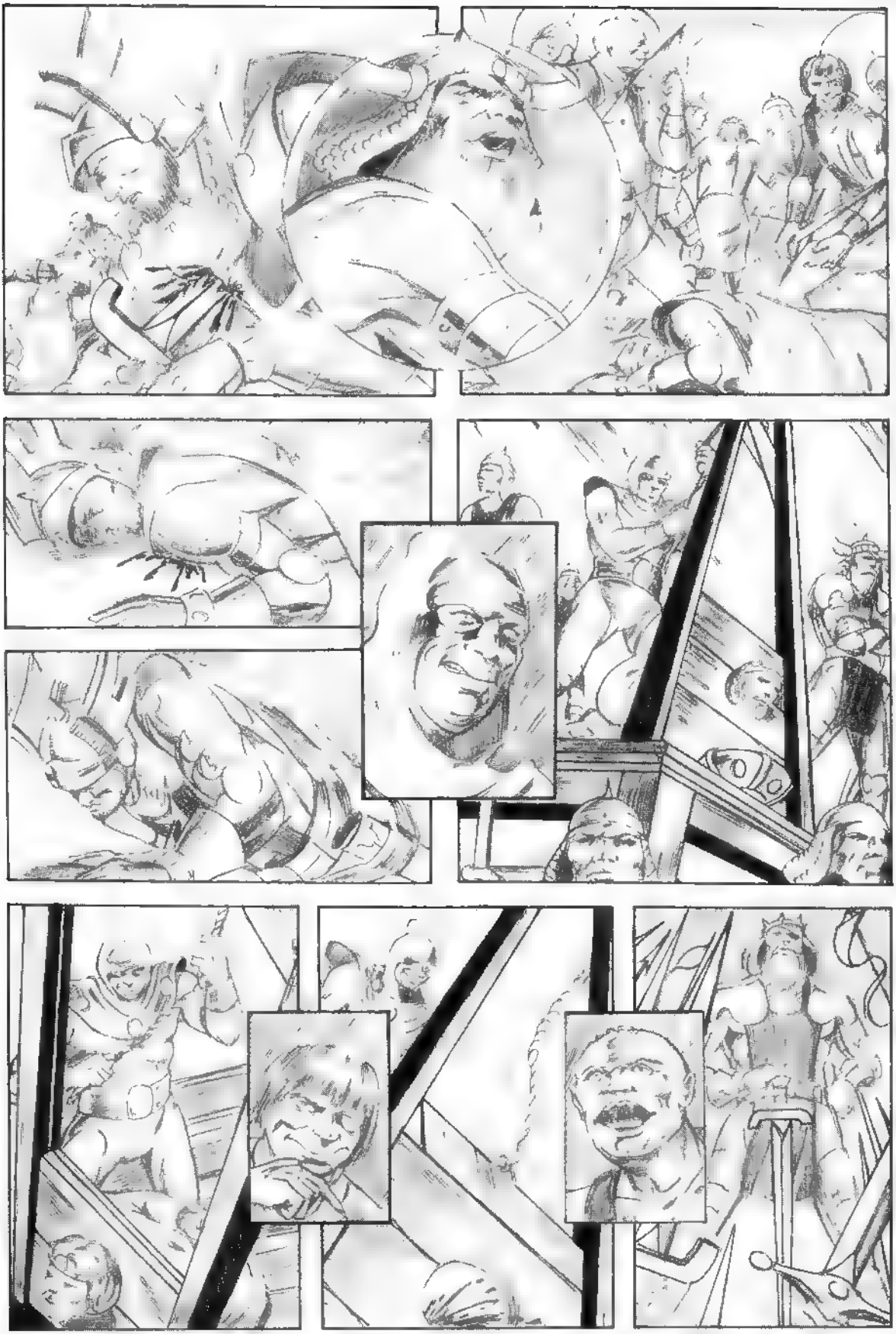
TIME PASSED.
WHAT DO YOU THINK NOW?
IF THERE WERE THREE WOMEN WOULD THEY NOT PRODUCE EGGS AND EVENTUALLY THREE CHILDREN?
THERE ARE NO THREE WOMEN. THE PROCESS ALLOWS NONE TO FORM.
WHAT IF THE PROCESS WERE CONTROLLED? IF SUFFICIENT EGGS WERE COLLECTED, REARRANGED AND JOINED. IN SOME CASES THE FEMALE PRINCIPLE WOULD DOMINATE.
BECAUSE THERE ARE TWO MALE EGGS TO THE CLUTCH, WE ARE MASCULINE. IF THERE WERE TWO FEMALE AND ONE MALE, OR THREE FEMALE, WHY SHOULD NOT THE RESULT BE FEMALE?
THE PROCESS IS UNTHINKABLE! I WILL HEAR NO MORE!
AND WHAT WILL YOU DO THERE?
I WILL FIND EGGS AND TRY TO HELP A THREE WOMAN INTO BEING.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO THE SWAMP.

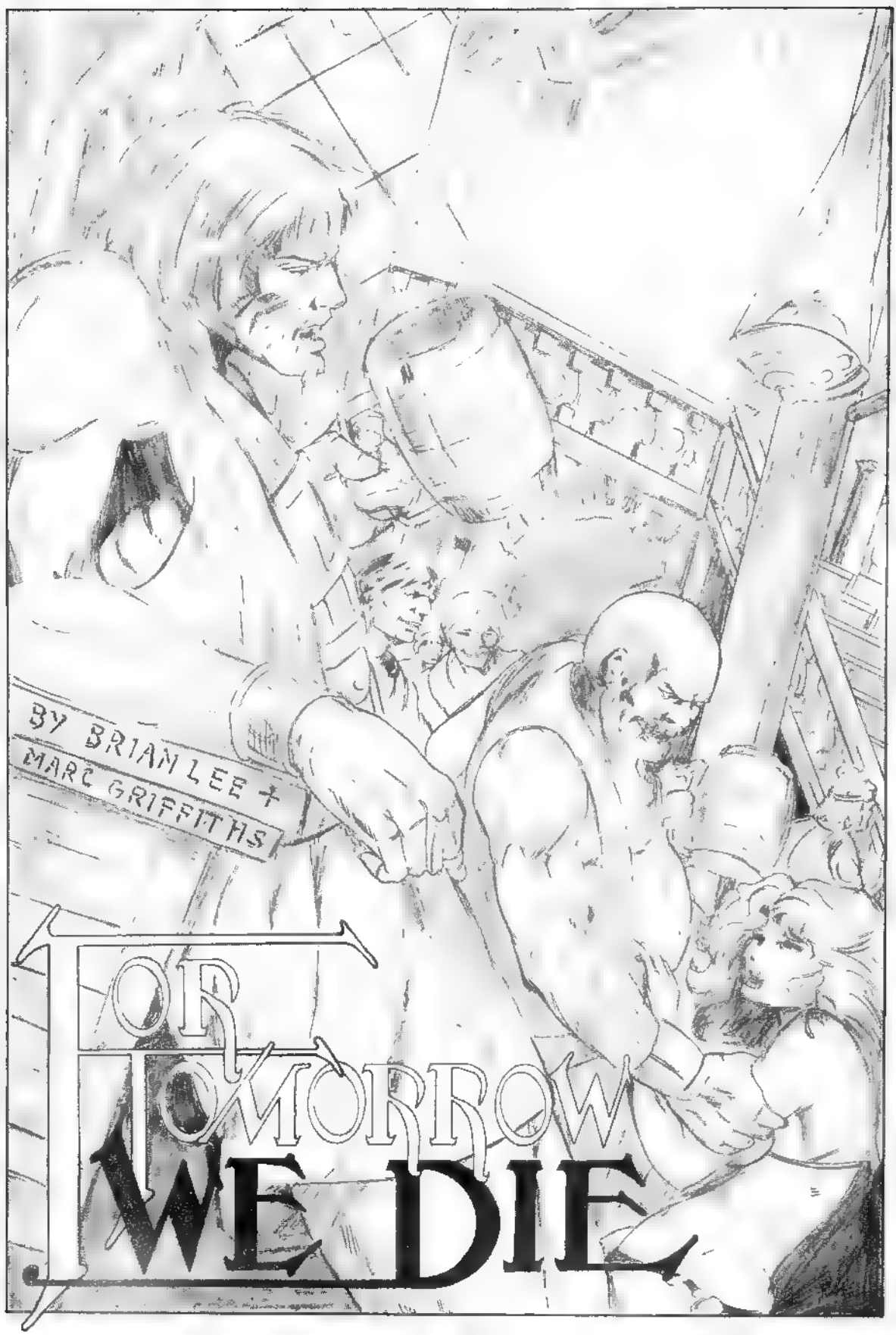
IF YOUR SCHEME IS SOUND, ALL MY COMRADES ARE DEAD IN VAIN! EXISTENCE BECOMES A MOCKERY!
PERHAPS NOTHING WILL COME OF IT!
THE VENTURE IS DANGEROUS! THE TWOS WILL BE ALERT!
I HAVE NO BETTER USE TO WHICH TO PUT MY LIFE!
GO THEN! I AM OLD AND WITHOUT ENTERPRISE. PERHAPS OUR RACE MAY YET BE REGENERATED.
A LONG TIME PASSED, OR SO IT SEEMED.
FREAK! FREAK! FREAK!

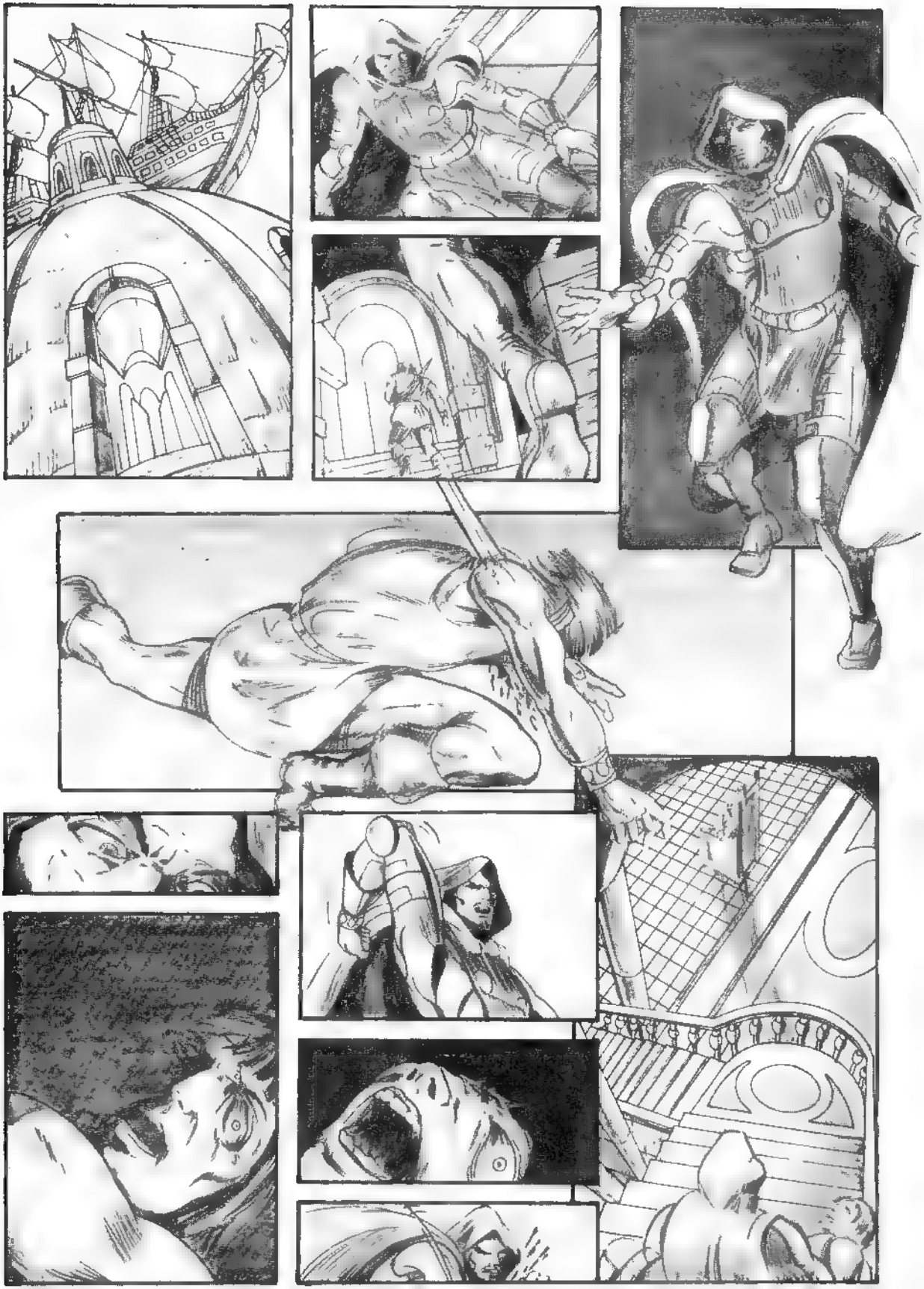
THIS WAY! TO THE WALL!
BA-THOOM!!
HOW MANY?
I FOUND TWO NESTS. I TOOK THREE CLUTCHES FROM EACH. I'VE KEPT THEM SEPARATE.

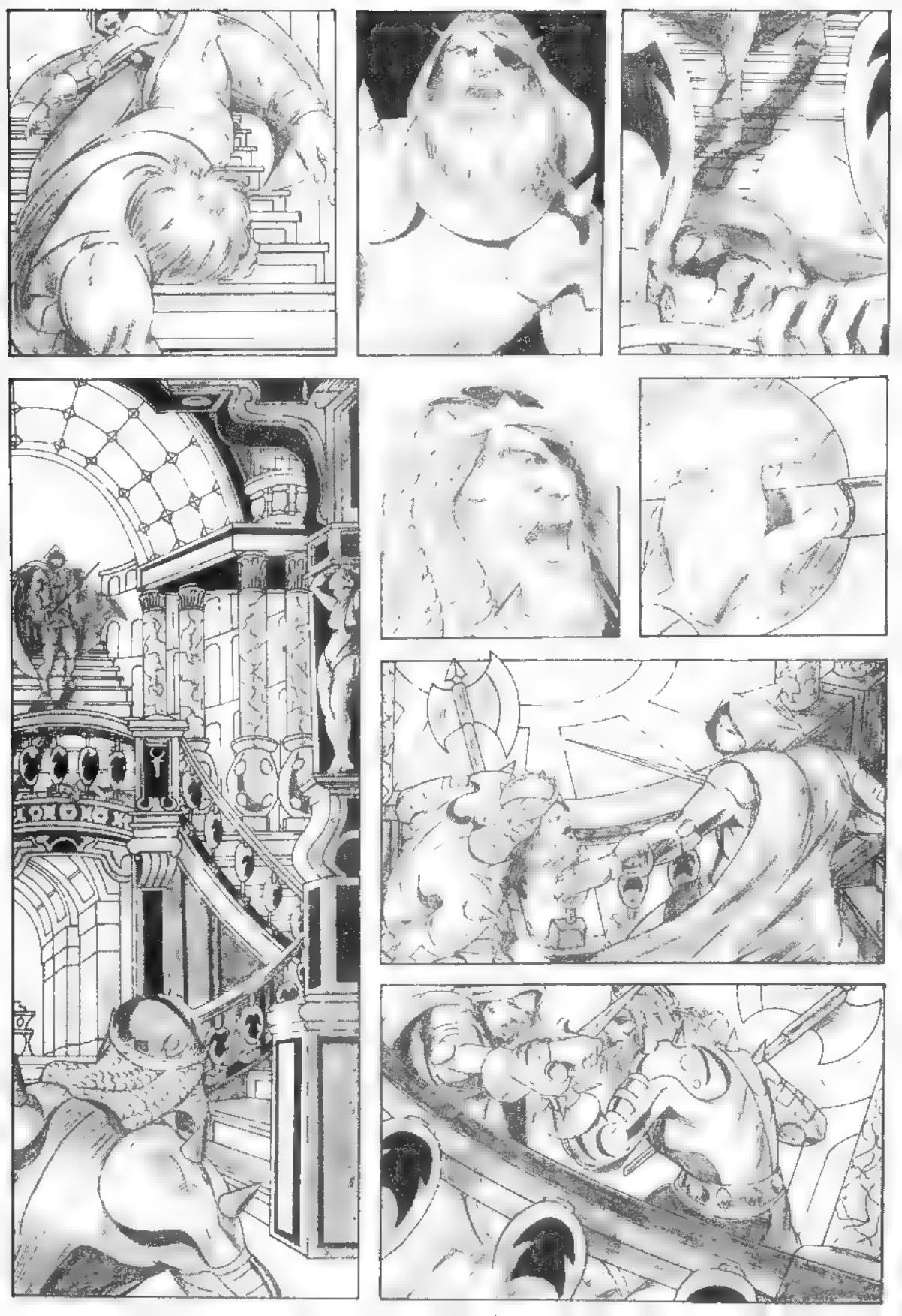
ONCEMORE IN THE HALL MAZAR ARRANGED THE EGGS ON A STONE SETTLE.
IF WE DO AS YOU PLAN THERE WILL NECESSARILY BE AN EXCESS OF MALE EGGS. IT IS A TEMPTATION TO ATTEMPT THE FUSION OF FOUR EGGS.
IN THIS CASE I WOULD URGE CAUTION.
IS YOUR WISDOM SO MUCH MORE PROFOUND THAN MINE?
I WAS BORN IN THE SHALLOWS AND OUR GREATEST ENEMY WAS AN OGRE, LARGER THAN YOU AND I TOGETHER. UPON HIS HEAD STOOD FOUR CRESTS!
WE ARE THREES. BEST THAT WE PRODUCE OTHER THREES...
WELL THEN TO WORK.
THE EGGS LAY IN THE COOL MUD, THREE PACES FROM THE WATER OF THE POND.
NOW, TO WAIT— TO WAIT AND WONDER.
I WILL HELP THEM SURVIVE. I WILL BRING THEM FOOD AND KEEP THEM SAFE. AND-IF THEY ARE FEMALE...
THERE WILL BE TWO FEMALES. OF THIS I AM CERTAIN. I AM OLD-BUT, WELL, WE SHALL SEE.

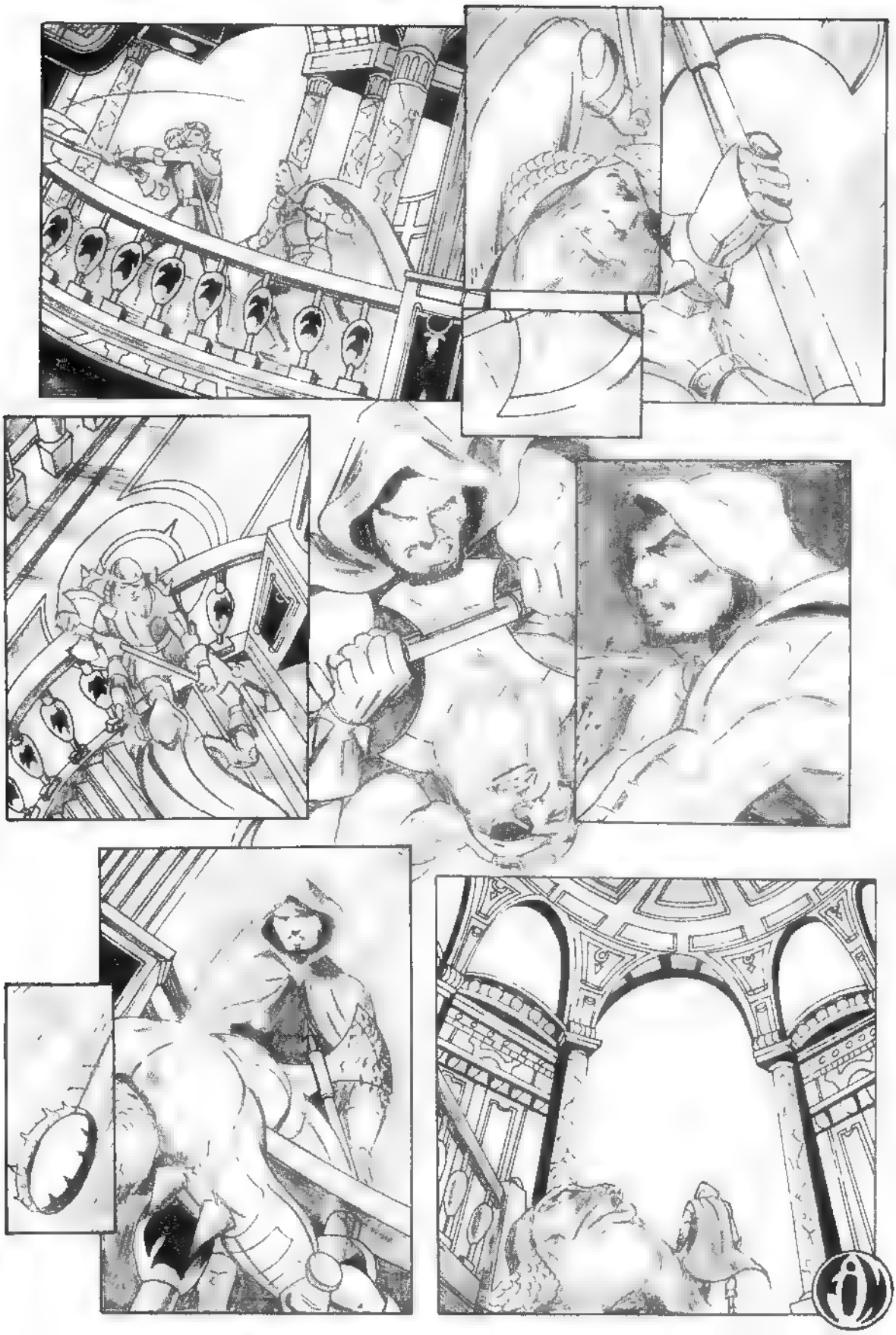

Prologue:




BY BRIAN LEE +
MARC GRIFFITHS
TOMORROW
WE DIE







SPACE STUFF
by TOM NESBITT '78
PATROL POD 21 TO COMPOST 5 PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE!
ROGER COMPOST 5. POD 21 HERE. WHAT'S ON YER MIND?
CLICK!
WE'VE BEEN GETTING SOME REPORTS OF SCATTERED 'TELEBIJIAN' ACTIVITY IN THE 'NYARK' DISTRICT OF THE PLANET 'ER-UT' IN YOUR PATROL AREA. JUST LIKE YOU TO CHECK IT OUT. PROBABLY NUTHIN' SERIOUS
ROGER COMPOST. WILL DO.
BETTER KEEP YER SHIELDS DOWN AT ALL TIMES ONCE YER ON THE SURFACE KID. SENSORS READ 'HEAVY TELEBIJIAN FALLOUT!
WOW! IMAGINE THAT! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. THERE ARE STILL SOME SURVIVING!
OH YEAH! WE STILL GET THE ODD ONE HERE AND THERE. THE TRICK IS TO MOVE IN FAST! BEFORE THEY CAUSE TOO MUCH DAMAGE! THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR!
ZIP

AND TO THINK THAT AT ONE TIME THEY LITERALLY INFESTED THE ENTIRE PLANET. GIVES ME THE 'CREEPS!'
WELL ONCE YOU GET A LITTLE MORE EXPERIENCE IN HANDLING SITUATIONS LIKE THIS, YOU'LL GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE 'LITTLE BUGGERS.'
REALLY? LIKE WHAT?
LIKE, WHATEVER YOU DO DON'T EVER LOOK THEM STRAIGHT IN THE EYE WITH YOUR SHIELDS DOWN! REMEMBER KID SHIELDS UP AT ALL TIMES!
CLIK!
IS IT REALLY TRUE WHAT THEY SAID IN CADET SCHOOL, . YOU KNOW, ABOUT THEM ONLY HAVING ONE EYE?
YEP, JUST ONE KID!
WOW! AND YOU'VE ACTUALLY SEEN THEM?
OH SURE! BUT DON'T WORRY KID YOU'LL GET USED TO THEM!
21

GOSH! JUST THINK OF IT! I'M ACTUALLY STANDIN' ON ANOTHER PLANET! BOY, IF MOM COULD JUST SEE ME NOW!
ANY TIME YER READY KID THERE'S A LITTLE WORK TO DO!
21
BOY THIS THING SURE IS HEAVY! WHAT IS IT?
THIS HERE IS OUR LITTLE NIMROD 407 UNIT! HANDY LITTLE ITEM, YESIR!
KLIK
OH YEAH? HOW DOES IT WORK?
WELL, IT TRACKS DOWN TELE--BIJIANS BY 'HOMING IN' ON THE RADIO ACTIVITY THEY GIVE OFF. ALL YA DO IS GRAB A SEAT, TURN THIS SWITCH, AND-
TIK!
ZOOT!
HANG ON!
ZOOT! ZOOT! ZOOT! OOT!

MINUTES LATER...
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED? HOW COME WE STOPPED ALL OF A SUDDEN?
OVER THERE KID...
"...AT THE TOP OF THAT CRATER."
WELL, THERE YA ARE KID! WHADDAYA THINK?
GEE! THEY'RE EVEN MORE BIZARRE THAN I IMAGINED! WHAT'S THAT DISGUSTING NOISE IT'S MAKING?! IT'S SO STRANGE!
AND DON'T FORGET MOM, PLASTROL CONTAINS REAL CEMENT, THAT NOT ONLY COATS YOUR CHILDREN'S TEETH BUT...
DON'T KNOW KID! OUR GREATEST SCIENTISTS CAN'T DECIPHER THAT MINDLESS PRATTLE! ALL WE DO KNOW IS THAT IT KILLS! FAST! WIPED OUT AN ENTIRE RACE OF BEINGS CENTURIES AGO! YESIREE!
NO KIDDIN'!
ANYWAY, ENOUGH 'CHIT CHAT', WE'VE GOT A JOB TO DO. GOTTA DESTROY THIS ONE FAST BEFORE IT STARTS TO BREED! YOU KEEP AN EYE ON 'IM WHILE I WARM UP THE LASER CANNON!
IT COMES IN 25 DIFFE
AVACADO, BURNT
WALNUT,
NT FLAVOURS!
DUM, T
GASC
ZEBR
HMMM..
IE, MUSK
FLAVO

...SOME KINDA WRITING... CAN'T MAKE IT OUT.
KLK
AHHH! MUCH BETTER! LET'S SEE NOW. SEZ `BRT•CON'. HUH? WONDER WHAT—
KLUNK
—HIDDEE HI THERE KIDS! UNCLE ANDY HERE WITH HANDY HYGEINE HINTS! REMEMBER: KEEP YOUR HANDS OUT OF YER MOUTH, YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE THEY'VE BEEN—URRK!
—IS YOUR BATHROOM BOWL GETTING TO BE `TOO MUCH TO HANDLE?' WELL CLIMB OUT OF THAT RUT, AND WISE UP TO `NU-BOL'! WITH NU-BOL, CLEANING UP, ISN'T A PAIN IN THE—BZZZT!
—TO FEEL THE WIND IN YOUR HAIR AND THE SEA SPRAY ON YOUR FACE. THAT'S THE FEELING YOU GET WITH `OLD SAILOR' AFTERSHAVE! WHY NOT TAKE A SIX-PAC HOME TOMORROW—VRRT!
-JUST ADD MILK AND WATCH THE FUN BEGIN! `LOONEY NURDS' STRIP YOUR MIND OF ALL YOUR INHIBTIONS, FOR THAT EARLY MORNING BURN-OUT WE ALL NEED! AND-

-BZZRRT SMART MOMS USE ATTACK IN THEIR WASH. WE TOOK THIS BLOOD STAINED T-SHIRT FROM A TWELVE CAR PILEUP-ZZT!
- NOW BARBARA WILL SHOW US-KZZK!- BE-HIND THE CUR-PPPZT! YES! IT'S A COMBINATION TWELVE SP-ZZZZZT!-
YZZT!
GOSH! THANKS COM-MANDER! YOU-YOU SAVED MY LIFE!!
I TOLD YOU HOW DANGEROUS IT WAS TO STARE THEIR EYES WITH YER SHIELDS DOWN! HOPE YOU LEARNED A LESSON GREENHORN!
AND HOW!
LATER . . .
OH YEAH! BY THE WAY KID, WHAT WAS IT LIKE, LOOKIN' RIGHT INTO THE EYE OF THAT THING? I'VE HEARD ABOUT—
IT WAS HORRIBLE! I WAS FROZEN, COULDN'T MOVE! AND I HAD THIS UNCONTROL-ABLE URGE TO GO TO THE REFRIGERATOR AND MAKE MYSELF SOMETHING TO EAT!
GOOD LORD!
HECK COMMANDER! DO YA THINK THERE COULD BE ANY MORE DOWN THERE?!
WHO KNOWS KID? WHO REALLY KNOWS?
ALL WE CAN DO IS MAKE SURE A MENACE LIKE THIS DOESN'T SPREAD TO MORE CIVILIZED PARTS OF THE GALAXY. BUT THEN, THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR.

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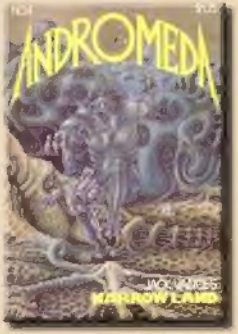
ARIK KHAN



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